

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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15

ACTION NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SSO-00 /035 W

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O 261115Z FEB 76 ZFF4

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY ROME IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7835

AMEMBASSY PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY TUNIS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 1100

LIMDIS

ROME FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY ATHERTON

PARIS FOR AMBASSADOR DESIGNATE ANDERSON

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: OVIP (ATHERTON, ALFRED L. JR.) AG MO TU

SUBJECT: ATHERTON TRAVEL

REF: (A) STATE 45776 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 45383, (C) ALGIERS 491

(NOTAL)

1. I INFORMED ACTING FM MOHAMMED BENHIMA ABOUT PROBLEM IN DETERMINING ATHERTON'S ETA HERE IMMEDIATELY AFTER RECEIPT REFTELS. BENHIMA REPLIED AS FOLLOWS:

A. OFFICIALLY I CANNOT IMMEDIATELY RESPOND.

B. PRIVATELY I TELL YOU THAT KING HAS ALREADY AGREED INFORMALLY TO RECEIVE ATHERTON MARCH 1. IF I NOW RAISE QUESTION OF POSSIBLE ARRIVAL MARCH 2, WE MIGHT GET "WRONG ANSWER" I.E., THAT MARCH 2, EVE OF FEAST OF THE THRONE NOT POSSIBLE. THEREFORE I (BENHIMA) PROPOSE TO LEAVE THINGS IN ABEYANCE FOR 24 HOURS. IN THE MEANTIME WHY NOT HAVE  
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ATHERTON (PARKER) ASK "THEIR ALGERIAN FRIENDS" TO GIVE

ATHERTON A MYSTERE (VIP PLANE) TO TAKE HIM TO MOROCCO  
AND I (BENHIMA) WILL TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO AUTHORIZE  
PLANE TO LAND.

2. FYI: ADDITIONAL COMPLICATING FACTOR MAY BE FACT  
THAT KING, OVERTIRED BY FLOOD OF VISITORS AND SUFFERING  
FROM HIS USUAL ALLERGIES, HAS COME DOWN WITH A HEAVY  
COLD (GRIPPE). I AM ASSURED THIS NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT  
BUT EVEN COURT MINISTER MOULAY HAFID SAID YESTERDAY THAT  
HE HAD NOT SEEN KING FOR LAST 36 HOURS AS LATTER WANTED  
TO DO NOTHING BUT SLEEP. ALTHOUGH KING'S DOCTORS ARE  
QUITE OPTIMISTIC HE WILL BE OKAY BY FEAST OF THRONE, THEY  
TEND TO BE OVERPROTECTIVE. HENCE EVERYTHING, ESPECIALLY  
LOCALE OF KING'S PRESENCE (FEZ, CASABLANCA OR RABAT)  
AGAIN IN DOUBT. MYSTERE COULD OF COURSE LAND IN ANY ONE  
OF THOSE PLACES.

3. SUGGEST WE LIVE WITH THIS CLIFF-HANGER, AND THAT ALL  
OF US DO OUR THING AS BEST WE CAN.  
NEUMANN

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NNN

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